REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 12, 14-15 and 17-20 are pending, with claims 12 and 15 amended, and claims 18-20 added, by the present amendment. Claims 12, 15 and 20 are independent.

In the Official Action, claims 12, 14-15 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Joon-Bo (U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2002/0055978) in view of Barber (U.S. Patent No. 6,865,596). The above rejections are respectfully traversed.

A review of the file history shows that Applicant's claim to foreign priority has been acknowledged; Applicant's drawings have been accepted; and the references of Applicant's IDSs of February 24, 2008, (as resubmitted via the IDS of April 2, 2007) and August 28, 2008 have been considered.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the telephone discussion between the Examiner and Applicant's representative on May 23, 2012. During the interview, a version of the current amendment was compared to the teachings of Joon-Bo. No agreement was reached.

Claims 12 and 15 are amended, and claims 18-20 are added, to more clearly describe and distinctly claim Applicant's invention. Support for this amendment is found in Applicant's originally filed specification. No new matter is added.

Briefly recapitulating, amended claim 15 is directed to

> A method for configuring a network including a plurality of network devices and a managing device managing the plurality of network devices, the method comprising:
>
> managing, by the managing device, network state information for

managing and controlling the plurality of network devices included in the network, wherein the network state information includes unique information uniquely assigned to devices included in the network for identifying each device in the network;

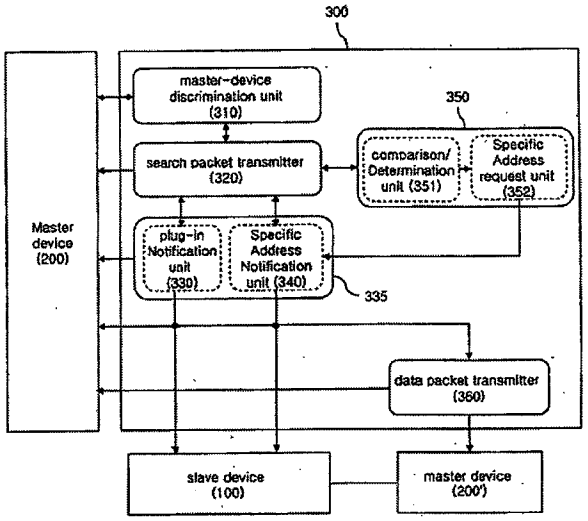
detecting, by the managing device, whether a new device is entered into the network;

identifying, by the managing device, a capability of the new device;

determining, by the managing device, whether the new device can be a management device managing the network and the plurality of network devices based on the identified capability of the new device; and

transmitting, by the managing device, the network state information to the new device such that the new device operates as the management device for subsequent network management, if the new device is determined as the management device.

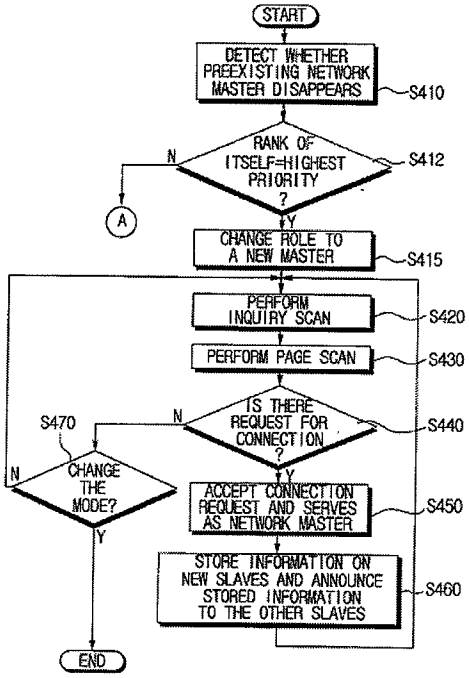
Applicant's Fig. 4 (reproduced below) shows a managing device 300 for managing a plurality of network devices in a network. Master device 200 is a pre-existing master device, master device 200' is a newly connected master device, and slave device 100 is a pre-existing or newly added slave device. As described in Applicant's originally filed specification, managing device 300 a) detects whether a new device has entered into the network; b) identifies a capability of the new device; and c) determines whether the new device can be a management device (i.e., a master device) capable of managing the network and the plurality of network devices based on the identified capability of the new device. Managing device 300 also d) transmits network state information to the new device such that the new device operates as the management device (i.e., a new master) for subsequent network management, if the new device is determined as the management device. Thus, when new master 200' is detected by managing device 300, managing device 300 recognizes that new master 200' is capable of managing the network devices and transmits network state information to new master 200', thus enabling new master 200' to take over duties (or share duties) with pre-existing master 200.



Applicant's Fig. 4

Joon-Bo describes a method for re-assigning master devices. Applied paragraphs [0048]-[0049] of Joon-Bo correspond to Joon-Bo's Fig. 6 (reproduced below).

FIG.6



In Joon-Bo, each of a network's slave devices determines that a preexisting network master has left a Network operating region (S410). Step S410 involves the sub-steps illustrated in Joon-Bo's Fig. 7. Here, if a disconnection between the network master 400 and network slaves 300 is detected, a corresponding slave attempts to establish reconnection. If reconnection between the network master 400 and the corresponding slave is not established, the corresponding slave determines the event as that the network master 400 left the network operating region, and informs the Bluetooth host of a "Disconnection_Complete Event".

In Joon-Bo, when the absence of the network master is identified, each of the slaves checks for backup master rank information, which is used to choose a new network master from the currently existing slave devices (S412). In step S412, each of the network slaves 300 checks for whether its rank is given the highest priority in order to be chosen as a new network master. The highest priority pre-existing slave changes its role to a new master (S415). The new master performs an inquiry scan (S420) and a page scan (S430).

In view of the preceding, it is clear that the Joon-Bo's new master is created when a) the existing master leaves the network; and b) when the pre-existing slaves determine that one of these pre-existing slaves has a higher priority backup master rank. Thus, in Joon-Bo, the new master is not a newly entering device, as recited in Applicant's independent claims. Instead, Joon-Bo's new master is a promoted slave that was already present in the network when the old master was disconnected. Thus, amended independent claim 15 patentably defines over Joon-Bo for a first reason.

Joon-Bo goes on to explain that the new master (i.e., newly promoted pre-existing slave) checks whether any Bluetooth equipped device attempts to establish a connection thereto (S440). If yes, the newly promoted network master accepts the correction request. The newly promoted

network master requests the newly detected device to set its role to a slave, and the newly promoted network master remains in its role as the network master (S450). Then, the new master stores information on the newly entering slave and announces information on the other slaves as well as its own information, to the new slave. The new master also stores information on other new slaves that enter the network or slaves that leave the network operating region, such as the addresses or names of the slaves, etc., and announces the stored information to the other slaves (S460).

Thus, not only does Joon-Bo fail to grant master rank to a newly detected device, Joon-Bo actually teaches away from Applicant's claimed invention because Joon-Bo requires that all newly detected devices join the network as slaves. That is, Joon-Bo teaches away from Applicant's claimed steps of a) determining, by the managing device, whether the new device can be a management device managing the network and the plurality of network devices based on the identified capability of the new device; and b) transmitting, by the managing device, the network state information to the new device such that the new device operates as the management device for subsequent network management, if the new device is determined as the management device. Thus, amended independent claim 15 patentably defines over Joon-Bo for a second reason.

Applicant submits that amended independent claims 12 and 20 patentably define over Joon-Bo for reasons similar to those discussed above relative to amended independent claim 15.

Applicant has considered Barber and submits Barber does not cure the deficiencies of Joon-Bo. As none of the cited art, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest at least the above-noted features of independent claims 12, 15 and 20, Applicant submits the inventions

defined by claims 12, 15 and 20, and all claims depending therefrom, are not rendered obvious by the asserted references for at least the reasons stated above.

MPEP 2141 notes that an obviousness-type rejection must explain why the difference(s) between the prior art and the claimed invention would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. MPEP 2141 goes on to list exemplary rationales that may support a conclusion of obviousness. However, Applicant submits that the Official Action and the applied references present no objective evidence that would support an obviousness-type rejection of Applicant's amended claims based on one of these exemplary rationales.

Turning now to new dependent claims 18-19, Joon-Bo does not disclose or suggest Applicant's managing device adapted to configure a network including a plurality of network devices, where the plurality of network devices includes an original management device (i.e., master) and subsequently includes a new management device. That is, in Applicant's claimed invention, there are 3 types of devices: a) management device; b) two different managing devices (e.g., original master and new master); and c) at least one other device different that the management device and two managing devices (e.g., a slave device). Thus, new dependent claims 18-19 patentably define over Joon-Bo for a third reason. New independent claim 20 patentably defines over Joon-Bo for similar reasons.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Michael E. Monaco, Registration No. 52,041, at the telephone number of the undersigned below to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Director is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge any fees required during the pendency of the above-identified application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

Dated: May 24, 2012

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Esther H. Chong
Registration No.: 40,953
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road, Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
703-205-8000